

Memorandum

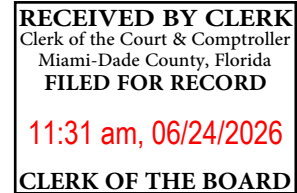


Date: June 24, 2026

To: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor *Daniella Levine Cava*

Subject: Mayoral Appointment - Director of the Seaport Department



Pursuant to the authority vested in me under Section 2.02(C) of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter, I hereby appoint Jonathan Daniels to the position of Director of the Seaport Department, effective August 10, 2026.

Mr. Daniels most recently served as the Executive Director of Maryland Port Administration (MPA) and the Port of Baltimore, the 11th busiest tonnage port in the United States. At the MPA, he was responsible for the management and development of the state-owned public terminals of the Port of Baltimore, facilitating expansion of container, cruise, cargo and environmental sustainability programs. Prior to that, he served as Chief Executive Officer and Port Director of Port Everglades, one of the busiest cruise and cargo ports in the U.S. Jonathan's experience spans leadership of major cruise, cargo, and energy operations, oversight of multibillion-dollar capital investments, and the successful management of complex operational and business challenges at some of the nation's most significant ports. His resume is attached for your reference.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Frederick Wong for stepping up and serving as Interim Seaport Director until June 30, 2026. On July 1, 2026, Deputy Mayor Roy Coley will serve as Interim Seaport Director, pursuant to the authority vested in me under Section 2.02(C) of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter. This interim appointment will remain in effect until Monday, August 10, 2026.

Please join me in thanking Frederick Wong for his service and congratulating Jonathan Daniels on his official appointment.

Attachment

c: Geri Bonzon-Keenan, County Attorney
Jess McCarty, First Assistant County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Department Directors
Yinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor
Christina Cicilia, Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs
Basia Pruna, Director, Clerk of the Board
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator

Jonathan T. Daniels

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transformational maritime and hospitality executive with more than three decades of global experience leading complex, multi-billion-dollar port, cruise, and destination operations. Recognized for building inclusive, high-performing cultures and steering organizations through strategic growth, crisis recovery, and sustainable modernization. A collaborative and inspirational leader who champions operational excellence, guest experience innovation, and environmental stewardship – driving world-class performance in every aspect of port and transportation operations.

EDUCATION

1994 - 1995 Maine Maritime Academy, Castine, Maine
Master of Science Candidate: Maritime Management
1987 - 1991 The Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina
Bachelor of Arts: Political Science - International Politics and Foreign Affairs
-U.S. Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

2025 International Association of Maritime and Port Executives
2018 US Army War College: Commandant's National Security Program
2002 New England Economic Development Program, Thomas College
1996 International Program for Port Planning and Management, University of New Orleans

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Executive Director

Maryland Port Administration – Port of Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland

February 2024 – Present

-Responsible for the management and development of the state-owned public terminals of the Port of Baltimore to facilitate expansion of container, cruise, cargo and environmental sustainability programs. Port of Baltimore is currently the 11th busiest tonnage port in the United States. Leading Port through rebound and recovery following complete closure after the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse incident. Report to the Maryland Secretary of Transportation and a seven (7) member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor.

- Leading efforts to expand and diversify business lines:
 - New cargo services: MSC Indus (India to East Coast US), ZIM/MSC (Asia to East Coast US), Maersk/Hapag Lloyd (Med to East Coast US)
 - Negotiated new long-term agreements with Carnival Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean Cruise Line allowing for at least a 27% increase in minimum annual guaranteed revenue in the first year
- Secured more than \$246 million in federal funding for berth reconstruction (\$30.1 million INFRA-USDOT), decarbonization/electrification program (\$147 million Green Ports-EPA), and Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration Project (\$71 million US Army Corps of Engineers)
- Current port development projects:
 - Public/private partnership to deploy \$147 million decarbonization program
 - \$51 million Berth 11-13 dock rehabilitation project
 - \$37 million port resiliency project to install sea-curb and flood gate infrastructure
 - \$23 million reimagining of World Trade Center Baltimore to expand tenant capacity
 - Continuous projects for expansion of Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP)

Chief Executive Officer and Port Director
Port Everglades, Broward County, Fort Lauderdale, Florida
2020 – 2024

-Responsible for leading the Broward County Enterprise Agency through implementation of a \$3 billion master/vision plan to expand business lines in cruise, containers and energy. Port Everglades was the 12th busiest container port in the United States (1.107 million TEUs), busiest energy port in Florida (126 million barrels of gas, jet, diesel, propane, and methanol), and 3rd busiest cruise homeport in the world during leadership tenure. Reported to County Administrator and nine (9) member elected Board of County Commissioners. Oversaw \$210 million revenue budget, \$136 million expense budget and \$750 million, five-year capital improvement program. Guided Port Everglades through pandemic related impacts which culminated in port to serving as the first US facility to facilitate reopening of revenue cruises after conditional sail order.

- Led efforts to expand diversified business opportunities:
 - New cargo services: MSC Santana (Far East to East Coast US), MSC Turkey/Greece (Med to East Coast US), MSC Indus 2 (India to East Coast US), CMA-CGM Americas XL (West Coast South America to East Coast US), HLS (Honduras to Port Everglades Direct), Ship Lilly (Venezuela to Port Everglades Direct)
 - New cruise operations: Disney Cruise Line, Viking Ocean Cruises, Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, Azamara, and Crystal Cruises. Negotiated long-term homeport agreement with Disney Cruise Line to include development of branded terminal facility
- Led Port through final phase of draft supplemental environmental impact statement with USACE for \$1.35 billion deepening/widening project to increase control depth from 42' to 50', including securing an increase in authorized cost through Water Resource Development Act (WRDA)
- Orchestrated complete realignment of organizational structure to create a more horizontal leadership configuration to more efficiently align all functions of the agency
 - Reconfigured operations to segregate cruise and cargo activities to provide focus on essential functions to more effectively deliver on specialized needs of cruise lines within the eight (8) terminals at Port Everglades. This included working with human resources for the hiring of all cruise-specific staff dedicated to delivering exemplary guest experiences
- Facilitated new brand and public image for the organization upon completion of numerous surveys, focus groups and public input sessions
- Secured more than \$120 million in state and federal funding for energy terminal development project to remediate historic terminal contamination, and resilience projects associated with bulkhead replacement
- Port development projects overseen:
 - \$471 million Southport Turning Notch: development of five (5) new cargo berths, acquisition of six (6) super post-panamax gantry cranes, creation of an additional 40-acre container storage yard
 - \$35 million re-imagined cruise terminal to serve as new homeport for Disney Cruise Line
 - \$120 million parking structure in support of cruise operations
 - \$75 million Portofino jet fuel storage facility (Vecenergy)
 - \$200 million P3 for development of project to increase size of berths allowing simultaneous accommodation of two (2) Aframax tankers, installation of new above ground rack and manifold systems
 - \$35 million Port Everglades International Logistics Center and Foreign Trade Zone

Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Mississippi State Port Authority, Port of Gulfport
2013 – 2020

-Responsible for the development and oversight of the state-mandated Port Authority, to include implementation of a \$570 million federally funded expansion and reconstruction project after port was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Reported to a five (5) member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor (3), City of Gulfport (1) and Harrison County (1).

- Facilitated transition from planning to construction, and completion of the *Port of Gulfport Restoration Project*, which included the installation of intermodal rail capacity, reconstruction of

wharves, construction of warehouses, acquisition of new gantry cranes and development of non-maritime commercial and industrial facilities

- Created and piloted a business development program which stressed traditional maritime interests, as well as a diversification strategy to strengthen revenue and employment opportunities. Program allowed the Port Authority to successfully fulfill the federal job creation mandate as established within the US Housing and Urban Development, CDBG Disaster Recovery Agreement:
 - Negotiated new leases with existing tenants (Dole Fresh, Crowley Liner Services, Chiquita International and Island View), while also securing the Port's first new tenants since 1999:
 - McDermott International: 40-years to serve as North American oil/gas spool-base manufacturing operation, as well as homeport for deep sea relay and construction vessels
 - Topship/Edison Chouest: 40-years, acquired 116-acre parcel and immediately leased property for the development of offshore oil/gas shipyard/subsea component facility
 - Coordinated with Carnival Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean Cruise Line to serve as deviation/diversion port for Gulf Coast deployment. Program led to both lines utilizing port for pandemic docking operation
 - DoD/MARAD: Coordinated with federal delegation and Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) for designation of the Port of Gulfport as one of 17 strategic ports under the National Strategic Port Readiness Network
 - University of Southern Mississippi (USM): partnership with the USM Research Foundation, allowed the Port to serve as homeport for the institution's research vessel. Partnership led to the construction of the Port of Gulfport Marine Research Center, and development of the Roger F. Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise
- Initiated membership and compliance in the *Green Marine* environmental program, establishing the first "green" port in the US Gulf of Mexico
- Finalized Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and secured record of decision and federal permit with Army Corps of Engineers for the dredge and fill of additional 200 acres for terminal expansion, to include bi-state, cooperative effort for beneficial use of dredged material
- Revamped the monitoring and compliance program at the Port Authority, emphasizing workforce development, corporate responsibility, and federal HUD/CDBG programs. Successfully resolved non-compliance findings from 2009-2011 through coordination with federal delegation and regulatory agency

Executive Director

Port of Oswego Authority, Oswego, New York

2007 – 2013

-Responsible for the administrative and operational oversight, management and development of the state-mandated, operating Port Authority. Reported to a nine (9) member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor.

- Conducted all marketing and business development activities, negotiations and pricing which created new cargo opportunities for the handling of aluminum, agriculture products, windmill components, steel/steel byproducts and heavy-lift/project cargoes
- Negotiated all leases, including long-term agreements with petroleum company for the operation of liquid bulk terminal and agriculture trading company for establishment of export operation
- Established port as a distribution center for aluminum, and grew operation from a single customer to ten (10) shippers conducting distribution to multiple East Coast and Midwest destinations
- Negotiated with New York State Department of Conservation for expansion of the exemption zone for ballast water discharge associated with "lakers" in the St. Lawrence Seaway System
- Coordinated with federal delegation for appropriation of emergency funding for expansion of dredging operations with the Army Corps of Engineers
- Negotiated five (5) year warehouse labor agreement with International Longshoreman's Association (ILA #1570-A) and served as representative on the employer's team for negotiations of two (2) Great Lakes Master Agreements

***President and Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Bangor, Maine
2003 – 2007***

-Responsible for the oversight of all administrative, community, economic and business development functions of the multi-county corporation. Entity operated as a Certified Development Company (CDC).

- Coordinated development project with Governor's office for the reopening of a paper mill that created 450 jobs and was named the "Economic Development Project of the Year" in the Northeast by the Northeastern Economic Developers Association
- Facilitated loan program which assisted in the creation of 1,200 new jobs throughout the state
- Provided testimony before committee of the U.S. House of Representatives which led to the creation of a multi-state development commission

***Director of the Office of Economic and Business Development
City of Bangor, Bangor, Maine
2002-2003***

-Responsible for the oversight and integration of all economic development functions of the City of Bangor including the joint-use commercial/military (101st Air Refueling Wing) Bangor International Airport (BGR), Community and Economic Development and Bass Park Arena Complex.

- Coordinated with US State Department on agreement to facilitate development of pre-clearance program at Halifax International Airport
- Attracted and served as member of negotiation team with developer for project that led to construction of \$150 million gaming and hotel complex
- Coordinated feasibility study, preliminary design and siting evaluation that led to the construction of a new \$65 million arena and convention center

***Managing Director
Port of Greater Baton Rouge, Greater Baton Rouge Port Commission, Port Allen, Louisiana
1999-2002***

-Responsible for the oversight of the day-to-day operations of the Port of Greater Baton Rouge including business development, public and community affairs, engineering, security, rail operations, foreign trade zone and dock operations.

- Oversaw the development of the strategic planning initiative, "*PortGBR: Millennium Plan*," with a focus on business development and long-term land use planning
- Secured new business opportunities and negotiated all leases and agreements with tenants including South Louisiana Cement, Inc., Louisiana Sugarcane Cooperative, Inc. and Dow Chemical, which led to the development of bulk storage facilities as well as a container marshalling yard and container-on-barge (COB) operation
- Initiated the process and coordinated the proposal, selection and transition from rail common carrier (Union Pacific) to switching company (Rail Link) for the Port owned rail operation

***Senior Trade Advisor and Director, Bangor Office
Maine International Trade Center, Bangor, Maine
1998-1999***

-Responsible for the State of Maine's international trade development efforts for eastern and northern Maine.

- Established new office to focus state's coordinated international economic development strategy into predominantly rural areas of Maine
- Coordinated the Trade Center's focus on forest products, shipping and foreign direct investment

Port Director

Eastport Port Authority, Port of Eastport, Eastport, Maine

1995-1998

-Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the state mandated, quasi-municipal operation to include lease and contract negotiations, business development, liaison with government officials, public relations, and development of the Estes Head Cargo Terminal and Marine Industrial Park.

- Worked with federal and state officials to secure funding for a terminal project which relocated port operations from the downtown facility to a new 43-acre marine industrial park, to include state transportation bond, Economic Development Administration (EDA) and CDBG/HUD funds, while coordinating final designs and permits to construct the new deep-draft terminal

CURRENT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- American Association of Port Authorities: Cruise Committee
- American Association of Port Authorities: Professional Development Board
- Florida Caribbean Cruise Association: Platinum Member

RECENT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/RECOGNITIONS

- American Association of Port Authorities: 2025 Port Director of the Year Leadership Award
- Transportation Club of Baltimore: 2025 Transportation Leader of the Year
- Florida Trend Magazine: Top 500 Most Influential Florida Business Leaders
- Port Everglades Association: Business and Community Leadership Award
- South Florida Business Journal – Three (3) time awardee as a *South Florida Top 250 Power Leader*
- United Way of Broward County: Campaign Chair for Broward County Employee Campaign

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COMMITTEES

- American Association of Port Authorities: Board of Directors and South Atlantic Representative
- American Association of Port Authorities: National Defense Committee
- Federal Reserve Bank of Boston: Community Development Advisory Committee
- Florida Ports Council: Chairman, Board of Directors
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance: Board of Directors
- Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce: Board of Directors
- Green Maine Management Corporation: Board of Directors
- Maine Maritime Academy School of International Business and Logistics: Advisory Council
- Mississippi State Pilots Board
- Mississippi Ocean Task Force: Governor Appointment
- Space Florida: Board of Directors, Governor Appointment
- US Department of Interior: National Park Service - Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, US Secretary of the Interior Appointment

CLEARANCES

- DoD/MARAD Secret Security Clearance
- TWIC

REFERENCES

- Available immediately upon request